



## Propulsion scientist appears on public television

*by Jeffrey Pearce, Propulsion Directorate*



*Walko*

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AFB, OHIO — Lawrence Walko, Chief of the Propulsion Directorate's Power Systems Branch, recently appeared in the PBS series "Secrets of the Dead."

Walko appeared in an episode titled "What Happened to the Hindenburg?" This program presents an alternative to the popular theory that the 1937 Hindenburg disaster was caused by the ignition of flammable hydrogen. Instead, the proposed theory states that the skin used to cover the Hindenburg, which was doped with a combination of chemicals resembling the solid rocket fuel used for the Space Shuttle, ignited due to a high voltage static discharge.

In the segment of the program featuring Walko, he explained how the Hindenburg accumulated a static charge on its skin simply by flying through the atmosphere. Later in the program, it was theorized that this static charge might have been of sufficient magnitude to ignite the Hindenburg's skin. @